The Impact Factor of the Language of Czechoslovak Normalization: A Study of the Seminal Work, *Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po XIII. sjezdu KSČ*

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Introduction

In December 1970, the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) approved a 15,900-word document, *Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po XIII. sjezdu KSČ* (*Lessons Drawn from the Crisis Development in the Party and Society after the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, 31 May–4 June, 1966), which constituted the officially sanctioned interpretation of the Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact intervention (20–21 August 1968). The text was originally published as a 16-page supplement to the mass-circulation Party daily *Rudé právo* on 14 January 1971, and was subsequently produced in bound print-runs of hundreds of thousands of copies up to 1988.[1] Precise

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[1] Citations here are from the 48-page first bound edition, *Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po XIII. sjezdu KSČ*, Prague, 1971, published by Rudé právo, (hereafter, *Poučení*), which includes the supplementary text, *Rezoluce k aktuálním otázkám jednoty strany* (*Resolution on Topical Questions of Party Unity*). Numerous other editions of *Poučení* were produced from 1971 to 1988, especially by the Prague publishing houses Svoboda and SPN, and in Slovak (*Poučenie z krízového vývoja v strane a spoločnosti po XIII. zjazde KSČ*) by Pravda, Bratislava. Hans Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945*, New York, 1989, p. 102, puts the overall print-run of the text at 'several millions'. Amongst the various translations of *Poučení* were a mass-circulation Russian edition, *Uroki krizisnogo razvitiia v Kompartii Chekhoslovakii i obshchestve posle XIII s'ezde KPCh*, Moscow, 1971, a German edition, *Lehren aus der Krisenentwicklung in Partei und Gesellschaft nach dem XIII. Parteitag der KPTsch*, Prague, 1971, and several English-language editions, including

details of its authorship were not made publicly available, but it was written by a team of hardline Communists, headed by Vasil Biľak, Chairman of the Party's Ideological Commission from 1968 to 1988, and principal spokesman of the so-called *zdravé jádro* (healthy core) of the Communist Party.[2] *Poučení* combined elements of admonishment, ideological credo and political manifesto with a potent reaffirmation of the price of non-compliance. It served both to define the scope of the 'investigation' into the failings of the past and to justify the measures taken to restore Marxism-Leninism. Amongst those measures was a seven-month-long process of screening Party members, decided upon at a plenum of the Central Committee of the KSČ (28–30 January 1970), and announced as 'a change of Party membership cards', in a two-page letter in *Rudé právo*, which was a forerunner of *Poučení* in terms of content, language and style.[3]

To this day, *Poučení* remains synonymous with the policy of normalization, and for many Czechs and Slovaks it still has overtly negative personal and historical associations. The significance of the text resides not in the logic of its argument, or the passion of its appeal, nor less in its artistic merits or its stylistic felicity, but in the impression that it made on its readership as a perlocutionary act (that is, its effect on its addressees as a specific type of 'speech act').[4] Not even the most zealous of Communists could substantiate Biľak's self-serving claim that it 'analyses the events of the time very deeply and truthfully'.[5] It is neither a convincing critique of 'anti-Soviet revisionism', nor is it an especially well crafted or thoughtfully conceived document. It is simplistic, tendentious, repetitive and poorly structured, and replete with logical fallacies and impressionistic assertions. Yet, it faithfully served its two principal purposes — 1) to re-educate,

Lessons Drawn from the Crisis Development in the Party and Society after the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Prague, 1971, and more recently *Lessons* […], Prague, 1978. All translations in this article are my own.

[2] Biľak's leading role is confirmed in his unauthorized memoirs, Vasil Biľak, *Paměti Vasila Biľaka. Unikátní svědectví ze zákulisí KSČ*, 2 vols, 2, Prague, 1991, p. 197, and his recent slightly expanded authorized posthumous memoirs, Vasil Biľak, *Až po mé smrti*, Prague, 2014, p. 307.

[3] Ústřední výbor KSČ, 'Dopis ÚV KSČ všem základním organizacím a členům strany k výměně stranických legitimací KSČ', *Rudé právo*, 3 February, 1970, pp. 3–4. The letter is reprinted in full in the unattributed volume, *Fakta nelze zamlčet. Svědectví lidí a dokumentů*, 3 vols, 1, Prague, 1971, pp. 36–52.

[4] J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford, 1962, p. 101, who introduced the concept of perlocution, puts it thus: 'Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them.'

[5] Biľak, *Paměti Vasila Biľaka*, 1, p. 7.

indoctrinate and intimidate its readership, and 2) to satisfy the political demands of the Soviet leadership.[6] The fact that *Poučení* was intended for a dual audience (which, critically, included the Kremlin) set it apart from most other texts of the normalization era and elevated it to the status of a canonical work.

From an early age, Czechoslovak citizens were obliged at least to pretend to learn the 'lesson(s)' of *Poučení*. The standard junior school history textbook from the 1980s, published in five editions between 1983 and 1989, refers to 'the difficult journey of consolidation' (a concept increasingly preferred to 'normalization'), and disingenuously describes the treatise as 'an in-depth analysis of the reasons for the crisis in the Party and society'.[7] For secondary school children, there was a special edition of *Poučení*, reprinted five times from 1972 to 1988, each with a print-run of 100,000 copies, including an introduction by Tomáš Slouka, advice on how to use the text, a list of twenty-two test questions, suggestions for independent work and a vocabulary glossary.[8] To reinforce the message, students in higher education were required to demonstrate a 'correct' understanding of *Poučení* as part of their final state examination. As Zdenek Hejzlar, a former member of the Central Committee, has pointed out, people were not really meant to discuss *Poučení*, but had to take it into account ('muselo se vzít na vědomí').[9]

The dissemination of *Poučení* marked a definitive phase of the campaign against the reforms that followed the Thirteenth Congress of the KSČ. It was the most widely distributed propaganda piece since the publication of *K událostem v Československu* (*On Events in Czechoslovakia*), which was originally written in Russian in 1968, and was almost immediately translated into Czech and several other languages.[10] The text had the official approval of different factions within the Central Committee of the KSČ, as well as Moscow, and was preferred to Černý's earlier even more

[6] Its merits were still being officially extolled in Czechoslovakia in 1989, just prior to the collapse of Communism. See Jana Perglerová (ed.), *Nezažloutlé stránky roku 1968*, Brno, 1989. Ironically, by the late 1980s, Gorbachev had abandoned Marxism-Leninism, although he allowed the Czechoslovak authorities to continue to interpret the events of 1968 in accordance with *Poučení*.

[7] See, for example, Miloň Dohnal et al., *Dějepis pro 8. ročník základní školy*, vol. 2, Prague, 1987, pp. 96–99.

[8] *Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po XIII. sjezdu KSČ* (Edice: Prameny a dokumenty k občanské nauce na škole II. cyklu), Prague, 1972.

[9] Zdenek Hejzlar, *Praha ve stínu Stalina a Brežněva*, Prague, 1991, p. 174.

[10] Press Group of Soviet Journalists, *K sobitiyam v Chekhoslovakii. Fakty, dokumenty, svidetel'stva pressy i ochevidtsev*, Moscow, 1968.

inflammatory work, *Jak se dělá kontrarevoluce* (*How a Counter-Revolution is Plotted*), which was subsequently withdrawn from sale.[11] The decision to publish *Poučení* as a supplement to *Rudé právo*, in the first instance, served to highlight its unchallengeable status, and simultaneously contributed to the reassertion of the role of the media as the mouthpiece for Communist orthodoxy. As Paulina Bren has pointed out, 'The Prague Spring had begun — and ended — not as a political revolution but as a revolutionary experience of words and images'.[12] *Poučení* was, on the one hand, the last word on the 'subjective' mistakes of the past, and a final warning that petit-bourgeois 'revisionist' tendencies would no longer be tolerated and, on the other, a 'sign' of the triumph of authoritarian rule. In semiotic terms, it arguably ranked alongside the other permanent 'symbols' of Communist power, such as the hammer and sickle, statues of Lenin, the red flag, the five-pointed red star, the Manifesto of the Communist Party and Fučík's *Reportáž psaná na oprátce* (*Notes from the Gallows*).[13]

The metaphorical and literal return to the old order was reinforced by the use of language, which in many respects represented a throwback to the past. Milan Šimečka puts it thus:

> In its style of argument and language, and its twisting of the facts, it took the reader straight back to the 1950s. Reading it, one was reminded of the pathos of the prosecution's impassioned speeches in the hanging trials of those days. It succeeded in presenting a version of events totally at variance with what millions of people had lived through personally.[14]

It is this aspect of the publication, especially the rhetoric employed in the deconstruction and reconstruction of reality, which provides the substance of this study. The article seeks to show how 'authoritative discourse', to use Bakhtin's term,[15] is created through a series of rhetorical devices, whose aim is not just to influence and cajole, but also to dissemble and

[11] Rudolf Černý, *Jak se dělá kontrarevoluce*, Prague, 1970.

[12] Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY and London, 2010, p. 45.

[13] Julius Fučík, *Reportáž psaná na oprátce*, Prague, 1945, subsequently published in numerous editions, tells of life in Pankrác Prison during the German occupation.

[14] Milan Simecka, *The Restoration of Order: The Normalization of Czechoslovakia*, London, 1984, p. 75.

[15] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Four Essays by Mikhail Bakhtin*, Austin, TX, 1994, edited and introduced by Michael Holquist, translated by Carol Emerson and Michael Holquist. See also Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, Princeton, NJ and Oxford, 2005, pp. 14–16.

deceive. The Oxford Dictionary of English describes 'rhetoric' as 'language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect, but which is often regarded as lacking in sincerity or meaningful content'.[16] *Poučení* was a tour de force of covert denialism. It redefined the 'norms' of discourse by reducing language to an ideological ritual. Even those Czechs and Slovaks who viewed the document with disdain and derision understood its 'coded' message. It was an uncompromising and immutable assertion of the requirement to toe the Party line, and it established the context and stylistic parameters of all other forms of political discourse. Like the texts of the early 1950s, it offered no scope for interpretation; it silenced other viewpoints and it was stylistically unrefined. Unlike those texts, however, it did not exhort violent retribution; it left some space for rehabilitation and reconciliation (at least for people who were largely passive sympathizers of reform), and it moderated its tub-thumping. Gone are most of the emotive designations, such as *sabotér* (saboteur), *spiklenec* (conspirator), *špion* (spy), *štváč* (agitator) and *záškodník* (terrorist), which had 21, 67, 114, 41 and 37 occurrences per million (ppm), respectively, in the 1952 sub-corpus of *Slovník komunistické totality* (*The Dictionary of Communist Totalitarianism*, hereafter, *SKT*).[17] Gone too are the more hysterical phrases of Stalinist propaganda, such as *hnusný zrádce* (disgusting traitor) and *krvavý pes* (bloody dog [used mainly of Tito]).

There is no definitive taxonomy of totalitarian rhetoric, but John Wesley Young has enumerated a number of the most common examples: dogmatic deduction, questionably unquestionable statements, bandwagon language, isms in Communist propaganda, ironic quotation marks, pejorative prefixes, elastic words, euphemistic expression and Aesopian language.[18] Some need little explanation, but the meaning of others is not so transparent. 'Dogmatic deduction' relates to the drawing of conclusions on the basis of suspect propositions presented as the absolute truth. An example in *Poučení* is the claim that the opposition to the foundations of socialism reflected the success of rightist propaganda in persuading honest working people that the battle was between progressive and conservative Communists, rather than being a manifestation of the class struggle.

[16] Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of English*, Oxford, 2006, 2nd edn.

[17] František Čermák, Václav Cvrček and Věra Schmiedtová (eds), *Slovník komunistické totality*, Prague, 2010. This corpus-based study of the language of state socialism compares texts from 1952, 1969 and 1977.

[18] John Wesley Young, *Totalitarian Language: Orwell's Newspeak and its Nazi and Communist Antecedents*, Charlottesville, VA and London, 1991, pp. 168–86.

Leaving aside the assumptions in the use of the terms 'socialism', 'rightist', 'progressive', 'conservative', 'propaganda' and 'honest working people', the very concept of the 'class struggle' is predicated on the irrefutability of the correctness of the Marxist notion of dialectical materialism. 'Questionably unquestionable statements' take the dissimulation a stage further, and disregard logical reasoning altogether, as in the assertion *naše přátelství a spojenectví se SSSR […] je hlavní záštitou samé existence českého a slovenského národa* (our friendship and alliance with the USSR […] is the main guarantor of the very existence of the Czech and Slovak nation). 'Bandwagon language' refers to the use of phrases which encourage the notion that alternative perspectives are perverse; for instance, *všichni komunisté budou i nadále neochvějnými bojovníky za realizaci současné politiky strany* (all Communists will continue to be staunch advocates of the implementation of the current Party policy). 'Aesopian language' involves the use of phraseology which has alternative meanings to Communists and non-Communists, as in *normalizační proces* (normalization process) — an expression that signified the negation of 'normality' to many ordinary Czechs.

This article adopts a corpus-driven discourse analysis approach, but it is also informed by selected aspects of critical discourse analysis and pragmatic theory, where they cast further light on the content and context.[19] For the purpose of compiling statistical information, I employed an online version of *Poučení* ('including errors', to cite Pavel Rybka, who uploaded it), which I 'cleaned' manually in order to improve its accuracy and maximize consistency with the first bound edition (referred to in note 1).[20] On the basis of the edited text, I used the Microsoft Word navigation facility Find to identify and produce my own lexicon of all the non-function words in the document. With reference to this list, I then compiled a smaller keyword list of lemmas and word families (comprising headwords, inflections, cognates and synonymous or semantically related derivatives and compound forms, and their negatives) with an occurrence

[19] For an accessible introduction to the approach, see, for example, Paul Baker, *Using Corpora in Discourse Analysis*, London and New York, 2006, and Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse*, London and New York, 2005. The distinction between 'corpus-based' and 'corpus-driven' investigations is highlighted by Elena Tognini-Bonelli, *Corpus Linguistics at Work*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA, 2001, chs 4 and 5. A corpus of 16,000 words is at the lower end of a specialized corpus, hence the desirability of employing supplementary analytical methods.

[20] *Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po XIII. sjezdu KSČ*, Prague, 1988. Available at <http://web.quick.cz/pr/history/pouceni.htm> [accessed 11 February 2012]. 'Cleaning' here relates mainly to correcting typographical errors and disambiguating meaning in the case of polysemous words.

of four or more.[21] Cognates and related words, such as *chyba* (mistake) and *chybný* (incorrect), were thus treated as a single entity, as were the word families *socialismus* (socialism), *socialistický* (socialist), *protisocialistický*/*antisocialistický* (anti-socialist); and *důsledný* (consistent), *důsledně* (consistently), *nedůsledný* (inconsistent) and *nedůslednost* (inconsistency). While this semi-manual process was time-consuming and fiddly, it obviated the need for parsing the input text or part-of-speech tagging and facilitated the task of identifying anomalies and inaccuracies in the online version of *Poučení*. The non-mechanistic approach likewise allowed for the clear identification of recurring themes, as discussed later. The document was subsequently analysed using the downloadable concordance programme Ant Conc, which facilitated, in particular, the process of identifying keywords in context and collocations.[22]

The relevance of Poučení

Why is it important to revisit the language of *Poučení* now? There are at least six major reasons to look again at how the text is written:

1. from the perspective of synchronic linguistics, it offers a valuable insight into language variation and change at a particular time and under a specific form of authoritarian rule;
2. in diachronic terms, it makes a direct connection with the linguistic practices of the pre-reform era, and defines the parameters of post-1968 political discourse;
3. stylistically, it encapsulates the approved tone and general tenor of the debate in the normalization period — ritualistic, excessively emotive and clichéd, and devoid of the subtlety, nuance, humour and other scholarly and literary qualities which had characterized much of the better writing of the 1960s;[23]
4. conceptually, it represents the victory of strictly regulated one-sided Soviet speak over the exploration of ideas, exchange of information

[21] A keyword is a word that appears more than would be expected by chance alone, as determined by the comparison of its frequency in a specialized corpus with its frequency in a large reference corpus. Lists of keywords thus generally exclude function words.

[22] Laurence Anthony, *AntConc 3.2.4w*, 2012. Available at <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html> [accessed 12 March 2013].

[23] Its style is reminiscent of Soviet Socialist Realism. As Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History As Ritual*, Bloomington, IN, 2000, p. 39, has pointed out, 'What sets the Soviet novel apart from most other serious novels is the absence in it of those features that can be seen as exploration or celebration of the objective/subjective split: parody, irony, literary self-consciousness, and creative or complex use of point of view'.

and elaboration of alternative ideological perspectives which had flourished during the Prague Spring;
5. semantically, it introduces two of the principal leitmotifs of normalization (discussed later): *sociální jistoty* (social securities) and *klid a pořádek* (peace and order);
6. as a discourse theme in its own right, post-1968 Communism (and its symbols and language) has become topical, as reflected in the significant increase in populist and specialist studies over the last few years.[24]

Why is it also important to bear in mind the historical setting in which the document was written? A corpus-driven approach only offers semi-decontextualized information about a publication, and cannot always give an accurate indication of the motivations of its author(s), or its effect on its readership and its unforeseen consequences. The meaning of an overtly political speech act is especially context-dependent. In the case of *Poučení*, the perlocutionary effect of the discourse was derived entirely from the enforced changes in Czechoslovak society, and from the seminal status that the text was accorded by the Communist authorities, as reflected in the medium in which it first appeared. It is not possible to interpret its 'meaning' without a knowledge of the developments which preceded, accompanied and followed its publication.

The consequences of the Warsaw Pact intervention and the policy of normalization, enshrined in *Poučení*, can be categorized under three headings: intended and explicit; intended, but implicit; unintended and largely negative (accepting that the dogmatists were not uniformly motivated by self-interest, and were not all cynically striving for discord and stagnation).[25] There are two interdependent intended and explicit messages which stand out:

1. politically, it unambiguously reaffirmed the end of the creation of a civil society based on democratic socialism, popularly referred

[24] Mainstream publications include Oldřich Dudek, *Hořký smích totality aneb Čítanka pro Husákovy děti*, Prague, 2009, Adam Drda and Karel Strachota (eds), *Naše normalizace*, Prague, 2011, and Petr A. Bílek and Vladimír Pistorius, *Tesilová kavalérie: Popkulturní obrazy normalizace*, Příbram, 2010. Amongst the language publications which include detailed reference to normalization are Jiří Pruša, *Abeceda reálného socialismu*, Prague, 2011, and Věra Schmiedtová, *Malý slovník reálií komunistické totality*, Prague, 2012.

[25] From the Party's perspective, the passivity and apathy which accompanied the changes also had positive effects, including the prevention of the emergence of a strong coordinated opposition.

to as *socialismus s lidskou tváří* (socialism with a human face), and endorsed a new direction, more akin to the values of the pre-1963 post-Stalinist past;

2. in terms of Soviet foreign policy, it was the clearest articulation of the limitations of self-determination in the Communist bloc, and of the Brezhnev Doctrine in practice.[26]

Amongst the implicit, but nonetheless intended messages, were:

1. symbolically, it served as a (seemingly) lasting testament to Soviet-imposed values — despite its manifest flaws, it not only remained largely unaltered for nearly twenty years, but its validity was dutifully and repeatedly asserted by politicians, teachers, historians, journalists and others in positions of authority and influence;[27]
2. within the Central Committee of the KSČ, it confirmed the ascendancy of hardliners, led by Vasil Biľak, over pragmatists such as Lubomír Štrougal (Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia from 1970 to 1988) and, to some extent perhaps, even Gustáv Husák (General Secretary of the Party from 1969 to 1987 and President of Czechoslovakia from 1975 to 1989);[28]
3. as an historical record of Party doctrine, it legitimized the claim, first made in the 'organ' of the Soviet Communist Party, *Pravda*, on 22 August 1968, that five senior ultra-leftist Party members, including Biľak, had signed a letter to Leonid Brezhnev, inviting the Soviet Union to intervene militarily. The original undated 'letter of invitation', which was written in Russian, requested 'effective support and help by all means at your disposal', while the Czech version added a more emotive appeal for 'fraternal assistance'.[29] A later letter

[26] See S. Kovalev, 'Sovereignty and the International Obligations of Socialist Countries', in Robin Alison Remington (ed.), *Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis*, Cambridge, MA and London, 1969, pp. 413–16, originally published in *Pravda*, 26 September 1968.

[27] See, for example, *Stále platné poučení: sborník materiálů z Celostátní vědecko-praktické konference k 15. výročí Poučení z krizového vývoje ve straně a společnosti po 13. sjezdu KSČ, konané v Praze 9.–10. 12. 1985*, Prague, 1986.

[28] In his memoirs, *Paměti Vasila Biľaka*, vol. 2, p. 197, Biľak acknowledges 'the hard struggle' to get the document published, and the reluctance of those both within and outside the Central Committee of the KSČ 'to tell the truth about the reasons for the Czechoslovak crisis and the intentions of the anti-socialist forces'.

[29] For an authoritative account of the 'story' of the invitation letter, including a facsimile of the approved Russian version of the letter, see František Janáček and Marie Michálková, 'Příběh zvacího dopisu', *Soudobé dějiny* 1, 1993, pp. 87–101. H. Gordon

appealing for international assistance, signed by forty members of the Biľak faction, was hushed up with the support of the Kremlin, for fear of inciting further intra-Party dissension.[30]

Ironically, the publication of *Poučení* also had several interconnected unintended negative consequences, including the following:

1. ideologically, in conjunction with the official pronouncements and actions that it canonized, it divided society and shattered the post-war 'progressive' consensus in Czechoslovakia, which the Communist Party never succeeded in rebuilding;[31]
2. psychologically, the military occupation and the policies that *Poučení* promoted had a profoundly depressive effect on the thinking and mood of many non-Party and Party members for nearly twenty years;[32]
3. economically, the victory of dogmatism was damaging, not least because the process of normalization cleansing (*normalizační očista*) resulted in the dimissal and/or emigration of so many highly qualified people, and in the promotion of less talented successors;[33]
4. in the eyes of most ordinary Czechs and Slovaks, the positive image of the Soviet military as a liberating force, which had been exploited endlessly by Communist propaganda, changed irreversibly to that of an occupying army;

Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution*, Princeton, NJ, 1976, pp. 716–18, argues that the resurrection in *Poučení* of the reference to the appeal for 'fraternal assistance' was surprising. Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV*, p. 68, on the other hand, has interpreted it as 'an officially sanctioned provocation of sorts', which deliberately exacerbated tensions between Biľak and Husák. Biľak himself consistently denied handing over the letter, even though he strongly endorsed the invitation thesis.

[30] See Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945*, pp. 103–04.

[31] The notion of a 'progressive' consensus needs to be qualified. There had never been full agreement on how to achieve the broad equality and basic human rights which constituted this consensus. In practice, under normalization, most people occupied what has been termed the 'gray zone' (*šedá zóna*) between apathy (promoted by socialist consumerism) and opposition; see Jiřina Šiklová, 'The 'Gray Zone' and the Future of Dissent in Czechoslovakia', *Social Research* 57, 1990, 2, pp. 347–65.

[32] According to an opinion poll cited in Hejzlar, *Praha ve stínu*, p. 149, in September 1968 fewer than 10% of Party members approved of the intervention.

[33] For a detailed overview of the purges, see Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945*, pp. 98–101. Renner, p. 101, puts the number of people dismissed, including 'voluntary' émigrés, at between 250,000 and 300,000. Even those who kept their jobs often felt compromised by the requirement to justify their views and behaviour during the events of 1968 and 1969.

5. in terms of intra-Party politics, the short-term impact of the Warsaw Pact intervention was also very harmful — it divided the KSČ into different groups: the so-called 'healthy core', which comprised 235,270 members who formed the screening commissions (*prověrkové komise*); the 'misguided' (*pomýlení*), who may have expressed sympathy for 'democratic socialism', but were permitted to redeem themselves by renouncing the reforms and declaring support for the intervention; those who were 'crossed off' the Party lists (*vyškrtnutí*), either because they remained silent or chose not to renew their Party membership, and committed reform Communists, who were expelled from the Party (*vyloučení ze strany*);[34]
6. in the longer term, it contributed to complacency, cynicism and opportunism within the Party ranks, which further alienated ordinary citizens;
7. as a corollary of the above, it rendered political change more problematic when Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of glasnost′ and perestroika briefly opened up the possibility of socialist reform in the late 1980s;[35]
8. outside Czechoslovakia, the suppression of the reform movement severely harmed the reputation of the Soviet system (already tarnished by the excesses of Stalinism and the invasion of Hungary in 1956);
9. within the international socialist movement, attitudes to Marxism-Leninism consequently became more critical, and Western Communist Parties were weakened or split into different factions;
10. as a further result of the entrenchment of the orthodox faction, in the Czech lands, the successor Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) has remained a largely 'conservative' organization, which is reluctant to dissociate itself entirely from its past;[36]

[34] Membership of the KSČ had declined by over a quarter to 1,217,246 by the end of 1970 as a result of expulsions, suspensions and resignations. See Renner and Kamil Činátl, *Téma: Poučení z krizového vývoje*, Prague, 2008. Available at <http://www.ustrcr.cz/data/pdf/projekty/antologie/tema5.pdf> [accessed 9 March 2012].

[35] See Michal Pullmann, *Konec experimentu. Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*, Prague, 2011. Ironically, as Gorbachev himself admits in Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdeněk Mlynář, *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism*, translated by George Shriver, New York, 2003, p. 47, the Prague Spring was a major impulse in the development of his critical thinking.

[36] By contrast with the situation in the Czech lands, the core membership of the Communist Party of Slovakia established the more moderate Party of the Democratic Left (SDĽ), which later merged with a breakaway faction, Direction–Social Democracy (Smer–SD).

11. the continued presence of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) as an electoral force has made it difficult for the other principal left-of-centre party, the Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), to reach successful coalition agreements;[37]
12. in generational terms, *Poučení* may have helped to enforce a fissure between the students of 1989 and reform Communists of the Prague Spring (the so-called *muži ledna* ['the men of January']) and their supporters, who were sometimes criticized by the former for having capitulated to hardliners;[38]
13. as a consequence of the widespread disillusionment with the approved norms of post-1968 society, many Czech intellectuals have now adopted right-of-centre views, which run counter to the Czechoslovak egalitarian ethos, as discussed by Holý, amongst others.[39]

The structure of Poučení

The text begins with a short preamble, which refers to the preparations by the Central Committee and loyal Party activists, from April 1969, to explain the reasons for the 'crisis' which culminated in the 'counter-revolution' of 1968. From the outset, the document thus assumes (but does not substantiate) the unquestionability of the premise on which the Marxist-Leninist line is based; namely, that the Prague Spring was a time of unwelcome upheaval which threatened the very existence of socialism. Moreover, it immediately impresses on its readership what Petr Fidelius has termed the 'implicit principle of Party infallibility', which was a *sine qua non* of the leading role of the Party.[40] (The dogmatists' narrow conception of socialism failed to take into account that most Czechs had claimed to be strongly committed to the socialist cause, even if they did not necessarily endorse the monolithic Soviet model.)[41] The second paragraph reveals that

[37] The Communists polled over 20% in the 2012 regional elections.

[38] 'The men of January' relates to Dubček's reformist faction, which came to power in January 1968. Galia Golan, 'Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia', *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, 1970, 1, pp. 3–22 (p. 4), identifies a parallel gulf between young people in the sixties and their parents' generation, whom they blamed for the Munich capitulation.

[39] See Ladislav Holy, *The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation*, Cambridge, 1996, and Václav Hořejší, *Proč jsou (mladí) intelektuálové většinou příznivci „pravice"?*, 20 February 2010. Available at <http://blog.aktualne.centrum.cz/blogy/vaclav-horejsi.php?itemid=9008> [accessed 2 May 2013].

[40] Petr Fidelius, *Řeč komunistické moci*, Prague, 1998, p. 169.

[41] According to Emanuel Pecka, 'Political Culture in the Czech Republic', in Fritz Plasser and Andreas Pribersky (eds), *Political Culture in East Central Europe*, Aldershot, 1996, pp. 205–10 (p. 206), 86% of Czechs in surveys conducted by the Institute of Public Opinion in June and July 1968 wished to retain socialism.

the change to Party membership cards, accompanied by interviews with over one and a half million members, helped 'to expose further the activities of rightist and anti-socialist forces in the Party'. There is no attempt to put alternative perspectives, or to seek compromise with more progressive-minded Communists. In the terms of critical discourse analysis (or more precisely a discourse-historical approach), the text exhibits the triumph of a dominant minority ideology, reinforced by the might of the state, over a disempowered majority, with virtually no means to challenge the imposed norms.

The main body of the document is divided into three rather ill-defined sections of roughly 3,000, 4,000 and 9,000 words, respectively. In as much as they can be said to have unifying themes, the first section seeks to contextualize the triumph of the KSČ, the mistakes of the Party leadership (especially those of Antonín Novotný, General Secretary of the KSČ from September 1953 to January 1968 and President of Czechoslovakia from November 1957 to March 1968), and the results of the 1968 January Plenum of the KSČ. Section Two focuses on the equivocation of the Party leadership after January 1968, on the strengthening position of 'right-wing' forces within the KSČ and organizations with 'anti-socialist' tendencies, on the rejection of political reform (especially the Action Programme, published on 5 April 1968, Ludvík Vaculík's 'Two Thousand Words', published on 27 June 1968, and the re-emergence of the Social Democratic Party as an independent body), and on the failure of Dubček (First Secretary of the KSČ, from 5 January 1968 to 17 April 1969) and his closest allies to implement the political solutions to the 'crisis' discussed with 'fraternal socialist countries'. The third section discusses at length the role played by 'opportunistic' and 'counter-revolutionary' elements in Czechoslovak society. It outlines six developments attributable to rightist factions: 1) the decline of the KSČ as the managing centre (*řídící centrum*) of the socialist system; 2) the disintegration of the power organs (*mocenské orgány*) of the socialist state; 3) the emasculation of the National Front, especially the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (ROH), and the creation of 'openly anti-socialist' organizations, such as The Club of Former Political Prisoners (K 231) and The Club of the Non-Party Activists (KAN); 4) the potential erosion of the leading role of the Party in economic matters (resulting from the reforms proposed by Ota Šik); 5) ideological deviation from Marxism-Leninism, attributable to the pressure put on 'honest editors and journalists' by 'aggressive groups of so-called progressives', and 6) challenges to the pro-Soviet orientation of the state, which divided society, and thus threatened civil war.

It is to be assumed that the symbolically significant five-pointed star on page 32 denotes the end of the sixth development listed, but it is not clear why the document fails to add a new (fourth) section, given that the subsequent text is neither a continuation nor a summary of section three. Whatever the reason, pages 32–43, which conclude with another star, offer an amorphous and subjective account of the aftermath of the Warsaw Pact intervention and the reimposition of Marxism-Leninism. *Poučení* ends with a short and poignant reaffirmation of the triumph of orthodoxy under the leadership of the KSČ, which offers no scope for further discussion or alternative points of view. It is not so much the emphatic nature of the expression of doctrine which spells out the stark reality of the new order, but the broader socio-political context in which it is set. The document as a whole derives much of its perlocutionary force from people's real-world knowledge, which is reinforced by a combination of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. In other words, the reader relates the vocabulary used, both synchronically and diachronically, to their own experiences, and to similarly authoritarian discourse in the public domain at the same time and in the pre-reform era.[42]

Principal themes and word groups

Like much of the political propaganda published before and after the Prague Spring, the sophistry of *Poučení* depends for its impact partly on the repetition of a series of well-worn themes and recurring semi-preconstructed phrases, as defined in Sinclair's 'idiom principle'.[43] The use of shibboleths and empty expressions (or *floskule* in Czech) is both literally and metaphorically part of the 'normalization process', in that it reinforces the semantic, stylistic and conceptual parameters of the post-1968 discourse. The stereotypically bureaucratic and ideologically ritualistic language of *Poučení* — a prime example of what Françoise Thom has called 'la langue de bois' (wooden language)[44] — seeks not to enlighten or to stimulate discussion, but to obfuscate and stifle debate. The

[42] See Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos, Majid KhosraviNik, Michał Krzyżanowski, Tony McEnery and Ruth Wodak, 'A Useful Methodological Synergy? Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Examine Discourses of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK Press', *Discourse & Society*, 19, 2008, 3, pp. 273–306 (pp. 279–80 and 299), and Ruth Wodak, 'Introduction', in Ruth Wodak and Michał Krzyżanowski (eds), *Qualitative Discourse Analysis for the Social Sciences*, Basingstoke, 2008.

[43] J. M. Sinclair (ed.), *Looking up: An Account of the Cobuild Project in Lexical Computing*, London, 1993, p. 110.

[44] Françoise Thom, *Newspeak: The Language of Soviet Communism (La Langue de Bois)*, London, 1989, translated by Ken Connelly.

opaqueness of the vocabulary employed is such that the school edition of the text (see note 8) chose to include a five-page terminological glossary comprising definitions of 144 head words and phrases.[45]

In order to classify lexical collocations, I looked for recurring thematic patterns in *Poučení* with a minimum of ten occurrences. This ruled out several striking, but statistically insignificant word clusters, and ensured representativeness. The lexical collocations identified can be grouped under at least fifteen broadly defined (and sometimes overlapping) themes, each of which forms part of the canon of unreformed Communist speak: 1) manifestations of opposition or threats to socialism (in its orthodox Marxist-Leninist conception); 2) the enemies of progress; 3) the First Republic (1918–38) and the 'abuse' of human rights; 4) Munich 1938, the wartime struggle for self-determination and liberation by the Soviet Army; 5) the establishment of socialism and revolutionary change; 6) the concrete achievements of socialism; 7) the notion of 'crisis' and the problems faced by the Party; 8) the role of the 'people' (*lid*); 9) the ideological battle; 10) Marxism-Leninism; 11) the defenders of the 'healthy' tendencies, and the role and interests of the Party; 12) missed opportunities; 13) the role of the USSR and Czechoslovakia's links with the Soviet Union (and her allies); 14) opposition to the Warsaw Pact intervention; and 15) normalization, re-evaluation of the past and socialist renewal. There are three further metalinguistic lexical groupings, which constitute a specific kind of stylistic and/or semantic sub-category: 1) phrases in double inverted commas, such as *„nová" politika strany* (the 'new' politics of the Party);[46] 2) expressions preceded by *takzvaný/tzv.* (so-called), such as *takzvaný československý experiment* (the so-called Czechoslovak experiment) and *tzv. sjezd českých komunistů* (the so-called congress of Czech Communists); and 3) text highlighted in bold, as if to elevate it to the status of a locus classicus; for instance, ***nejsilnějším poutem je socialistický internacionalismus*** (the strongest bond is socialist internationalism).

Manifestations of opposition or threats to Soviet-style hegemony include the usual leitmotifs and isms of Marxist-Leninist dogma: counter-revolution, opportunism, revisionism, anti-socialist platforms, imperialism, ideological diversion, capitalist aggression, international reaction, right-wing attacks, and so forth. Young has applied the term 'elastic words' to

[45] The word list also allowed the ideologues to impose their own interpretation of meaning. For example, *levicové síly* (left-wing forces) is defined as 'in politics: a designation for an advocate of progressive, revolutionary views; in the socialist movement: advocates of Marxist-Leninist views (the antithesis of right-wing revisionists)', p. 90.

[46] Where appropriate, text is put into the nominative case, and capitals and full stops are removed.

these stereotypical catch-all phrases embracing 'disparate categories of people, ideas, and experience'.[47] Statistically, the most important are *pravice* (the right), *pravicový* (right-wing [adj.]), *pravicově* (right-wing [adv.]), *pravičák* (right-winger), with 182 citations (ranked third in the corpus of lexical words); *kontrarevoluce* (counter-revolution) and its derivatives, *kontrarevoluční* (counter-revolutionary) and *kontrarevolucionář* (counter-revolutionary), with 59 citations; *oportunismus* (opportunism) and its derivatives *oportunista* (opportunist) and *oportunistický* (opportunistic), with 47 citations; the adjectives *protisocialistický* and *antisocialistický* (antisocialist), cited 42 times; and *revize* (revision), *revizionismus* (revisionism), *revizionistický* (revisionist [adj.]) and *revidovat* (to revise), with 39 citations. There are no objective criteria by which to establish the likelihood of the occurrence of a particular lexeme or word group in a specialized document of this nature. Frequency of usage, however, gives at least some indication of the relative importance of cognate forms in the hierarchy of Communist rhetoric.[48] In most cases, lexical words and derivatives which occur in the top one hundred in *Poučení* (that is, with 22 or more citations) considerably exceed their frequency in the standard non-political lexicon. Other less commonly occurring forms may, of course, also exceed expectations, as with *usnesení* (resolution), cited eleven times (or 0.06% of all citations) and *aparát* (apparatus), cited eight times (or 0.05%), compared with 1,622 citations (or 0.0016%) and 2,398 citations (or 0.0024%), respectively, in the 100-million-word sub-corpus of the Czech National Corpus, SYN 2010, based mainly on texts from 2005 to 2009.[49]

The constant repetition and semantic flexibility of the descriptor 'right' is especially conspicuous, and is intended to reinforce a negative association between any kind of deviation from Marxism-Leninism and 'bourgeois' politics. Equally noteworthy is the overuse of negative prefixes, such as *kontra-*, *proti-* and *anti-*, with a pejoratively tinged noun or adjective elsewhere in the phrase.[50] This favoured rhetorical device serves simultaneously to invalidate and equate all expressions of reform, thereby implicitly reinforcing the correctness and unassailability of Party doctrine. Another disparaging concept which stands out is 'revisionism'. Michael

[47] See Young, *Totalitarian Language*, pp. 178–80.

[48] The problem of interpreting the significance of the data is compounded by the fact that the other available corpora deal in raw frequencies for headwords (rather than lexical word groups).

[49] Korpus SYN 2010, *Český národní korpus*, Prague <http://ucnk.ff.cuni.cz> [accessed 17 July 2013].

[50] See Young, *Totalitarian Language*, pp. 176–78.

Waller has argued that this is 'the most sensitive term of the whole of the vocabulary of the communist movement'. Of the two meanings of the noun identified by Waller — the re-examination of Marxist theory in the light of changing circumstances, and the condemnation of particular Party policies — it is in the latter (more common) sense that it was employed in *Poučení*. However, the document does not observe a systematic distinction between revisionists who, Waller argues, are traditionally regarded as deviant members of the Communist movement, and reformists, who lie outside the movement.[51] Indeed, the concept of *reforma* (reform), which was adopted by Dubček and his allies, appears only three times in any form in the text; in each case in relation to economic change.

Highly significant in the context of the hardliners' ideological battle is the prominence of phrases alluding explicitly to the challenge to socialism from within; including the enduring influence of bourgeois democracy, the re-emergence of nationalism (cf. echoes of the show trials of the early 1950s), and the breakdown of the established order within the Party, the state apparatus, the judiciary, the security forces and society as a whole. The noun *buržoazie* (bourgeoisie), and its derivatives *buržoazní* (bourgeois [adj.]) and *buržoazně* (*demokratický*) (bourgeois [adv.] [democratic]), as well as *maloburžoazní* and its synonym *maloměšťácký* (petit-bourgeois [adj.]), are cited 30 times, in phrases such as *zbytky buržoazních názorů* (the remnants of bourgeois views) and *maloburžoazní ideologie nacionalismu* (the petit-bourgeois ideology of nationalism). Other manifestations of internal dissent are expressed in nominalizations such as *rozněcování nenávisti proti Sovětskému svazu* (the inflaming of hatred against the Soviet Union) and abstract noun phrases such as *masarykismus a sociáldemokratismus* (Masarykism and social democratism), which harks back to Novotný's *kampaň proti sociáldemokratismu a masarykismu* (campaign against social democratism and Masarykism) in December 1953.[52]

Much has been made of the function of nominalization as a transitivity feature in ideological discourse. Simpson and Mayr, for example, have argued that 'Nominalization offers a less specific representation of an action, largely because it "stands for" a process while simultaneously eliding those in the process'.[53] Alan Partington has described it as an 'information-impoverishment technique', and has noted that 'it removes

[51] Michael Waller, *The Language of Communism: A Commentary*, London, Sydney and Toronto, 1972, pp. 66 and 68.

[52] Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was President of Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1935.

[53] Paul Simpson and Andrea Mayr, *Language and Power: A Resource Book for Students*, London, New York, 2010, p. 6.

the indications of time and modality that are generally present in a verb clause'.[54] Put simply, it serves to limit the scope of the investigation by avoiding specific reference to the actors, temporal details and various other 'conditions' which surround the discourse theme. Particularly striking is the absence of epistemic modal expressions (relating to the likelihood of the veracity of the official interpretation of events).[55] The authors of *Poučení* clearly understood that any formulations that invited equivocation or questioning would erode their authority.

Another method employed extensively in *Poučení*, which obviates the need to be explicit, is the use of the passive voice. Once again this periphrastic technique avoids direct reference to agency, thereby rendering the text less susceptible to purely factual criticism. Kamil Činátl suggests that passive constructions, such as *je řečeno* (it is said), *uskutečňovala se* (came into force) and *byly obsaženy* (were contained), add to the appearance of objectivity. He also asserts that, in the absence of a specified agent, the position of the subject is mainly occupied by abstract entities. This is borne out by examples such as *proces rozvíjení socialistické revoluce […]* (the process of the development of the socialist revolution […]) and *antisovětská orientace pravicových sil v KSČ […]* (the anti-Soviet orientation of right-wing forces in the KSČ […]), although the twelve nouns that he cites are not confined to the role of subject. He further observes that active verbal forms are primarily linked to the aggressive behaviour of the right, and gives several good illustrations, such as *začala uvádět v pochybnost* (began to cast into doubt), *narušovala* (eroded), *přecházela do útoku* (moved onto the offensive).[56] As elsewhere, the intention is to create the impression of a series of inalienable and immutable 'truths', which cannot be challenged, and are independent of the judgements and feelings of the authors.

The rhetoric of *Poučení* has the effect of creating a kind of quasi-reality, which deflects attention from the true nature of one-party rule. This involves, inter alia, the evocation of a semi-mythical past, which presents all challenges to the status quo as inimical to the interests of socialist progress. Particularly noteworthy are expressions relating to the foundation of the one-party state, such as *kontrarevoluční puč v únoru 1948* (the counter-revolutionary putsch in 1948), which has specific associations with the 'Trial of anti-state conspiracy centred around Rudolf

[54] Alan Partington, *The Linguistics of Political Argument: The Spin-doctor and the Wolf-pack at the White House*, London and New York, 2003, p. 15.

[55] For more on the semantic domain of epistemic modality, see, for example, Jan Nuyts, *Epistemic Modality, Language, and Conceptualization: A Cognitive-Pragmatic Perspective*, Amsterdam, 2001, pp. 21–32.

[56] Činátl, *Téma*, p. 10.

Slánský' in 1951.[57] The rewriting of the story of the Prague Spring in late 1970 was more problematic, because the events were still very much in people's memory, and there was such widespread opposition to the Warsaw Pact intervention. This did not, however, discourage the authors of the text from depicting a situation in which there was a major threat of violent conflict, as suggested by the expressions *krvavá tragédie* (bloody tragedy), *občanská válka* (civil war), *ovzduší hysterie zastrašování a teroru* (atmosphere of the hysteria of intimidation and terror) and *rodící se bílý teror* (growing white terror). Ironically, the only sustained violence in 1968 accompanied the arrival of foreign troops, and was justified by the euphemism *bratrská internacionální pomoc* (fraternal international assistance). Few of those who had lived through the period would have recognized the plot constructed by the hardliners (in either its literary or its political sense) but, over time, in conjunction with other propaganda, and in the absence of alternative sources of information, the text may have had some success in promoting the notion that the changes threatened stability.[58] More importantly, perhaps, it offered reform-minded citizens, for whom pragmatism subsequently took precedence over principle, a pretext for justifying their volte-face.

One of the salient features of the language of Communism, as exemplified by *Poučení*, was that it established a series of axiological contrasts: between positive (*pozitivní*) and negative (*negativní*), right (*správný*) and wrong (*nesprávný*), consistent (*důsledný*) and inconsistent (*nedůsledný*), resolute (*rozhodný*, *pevný* [firm]) and irresolute (*nerozhodný*, *kolísavý* [wavering]), unity (*jednota*) and division (*nejednota*), the truth (*pravda*) and lies (*lži*), and others. This binary division implicitly contributed to a broader Manichean opposition between 'good' (the Party and its policies) and 'bad' (alternatives to Marxism-Leninism), as manifest most clearly in the contrast between the 'healthy core' and the seemingly innumerable enemies of progress. The foes were both internal, as in phrases such as *opoziční, tzv. druhé centrum ve straně* (the oppositional so-called second centre in the Party) and *reakční představitelé katolického kléru* (reactionary representatives of the Catholic clergy), and external, as in *agenti západních rozvědek* (agents of Western espionage groups) and *revizionistický a pravicově mezinárodní*

[57] While there was inevitably some concerted opposition to the establishment of state socialism in February 1948, the notion of a counter-revolutionary putsch (spearheaded by Slánský, whose name was cleared in April 1963, and who was fully rehabilitated in May 1968) is a misrepresentation of historical fact.

[58] My own experience of talking to younger Czechs in the 1980s was that they were poorly informed about the events of 1968, and were sceptical about the reform movement.

imperialismus (revisionist and right-orientated international imperialism). As in other cases, some of the blame is explicitly pinned on the failure of the system to eradicate the influence of Czechoslovakia's pre-socialist past: *náboženské přežitky* (religious remnants), *představitelé poražené buržoazie* (representatives of the defeated bourgeoisie), and so on.

Harry Hodgkinson has identified three distinct types of terms of abuse for the enemies of socialism: 1) epithets based on the notion of capitalist exploitation, such as 'capitalist hyenas', 2) verbal caricatures intended to raise prejudice against opponents, such as 'chewing-gum spivs', and 3) words used within the Communist movement against backsliders, such as 'opportunist'.[59] *Poučení* did not resort to the first two (largely outdated) forms of slur, but it abounded in disparaging fixed expressions for those who deviated from Marxism-Leninism, such as *pravicově oportunistické síly* (right-orientated opportunistic forces). This crude denigration of the opposition, real or invented, was intended both to undermine their legitimacy and to highlight the uncompromising stance of the new ruling elite. However, it also served a more subtle propagandistic purpose — to encourage those who had been in favour of Dubček's reforms, but were apprehensive about the speed and scale of the changes, to distance themselves from more radical 'elements'.

Unlike János Kádár (General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party from 1956 to 1988), who replaced the dictum 'whoever is not for us is against us' (in Czech *kdo není s námi, je proti nám*) with the (New Testament) formulation 'whoever is not against us is for us' (*kdo není proti nám, je s námi*), the neo-Stalinist faction in Czechoslovakia quickly rejected all forms of inclusivity which necessitated compromise. Biľak and his associates persisted with the view that there was one correct interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, and that any alternative perspectives represented a coordinated opposition to socialist values. The hardliners' fixation with a common, unified enemy is reflected throughout *Poučení* in maxims such as *blok revizionistických a nacionalistických sil* (bloc of revisionist and nationalistic forces) and *protikomunistická a protisovětská fronta* (anti-Communist and anti-Soviet front). Nowhere does the document draw the logical inference that the alleged nature and strength of the resistance posed by the 'other' might be a corollary of the very policies advocated by the erstwhile Party hierarchy.

The juxtaposition of the supposed triumph of state socialism and the failings of the 'bourgeois' past is highlighted several times in the

[59] Harry Hodgkinson, *Doubletalk: The Language of Communism*, London, 1955, p. 2.

text; compare, for example, phrases such as *utiskovaná a vykořisťovaná dělnická třída* (the oppressed and exploited working class) and *odstranila se zaostalost, bída i vystěhovalectví* (backwardness, poverty and emigration have been eliminated). 'Bourgeois' policies are also explicitly linked, as early as the fifth paragraph, to the German occupation: *Mnichov a rozbití ČSR prokázaly, že vládnoucí česká a s ní spjatá slovenská buržoazie zaprodala pro své třídní vykořisťovatelské zájmy i samu existenci československého samostatného státu* (Munich and the break-up of the Czechoslovak Republic [ČSR] demonstrated that the ruling Czech and associated Slovak bourgeoisie also betrayed, for the sake of their own class interests, the very existence of the independent Czechoslovak state). Later in the document, the authors twice employ *předmnichovská republika* (pre-Munich Republic) (which I have termed elsewhere a 'temporal frame') to reinforce the idea of a connection between liberal democracy and the occupation.[60] The strength of the association between the noun *Mnichov* and the Munich Agreement, and the continued use of pejorative epithets such as *mnichovský diktát* (Munich Diktat) and *mnichovská zrada* (Munich Betrayal), testify to its iconic status in Czech historiography. The fact that the authors use virtually the same phrases to denote the Second (post-Munich) Czechoslovak Republic (30 September 1938 to 15 March 1939) and the Prague Spring — *kritická doba* (critical time) and *kritické období* (critical period), respectively — would thus appear not to be coincidental. By contrast with the humiliation of Munich, the struggle for self-determination and the role of the Soviet Army in the liberation of the Slovak and Czech lands are repeatedly lauded in *Poučení* and other official sources to justify the Communists' exclusive right to rule and their de facto subordination to Moscow.

The establishment of socialism and revolutionary change is denoted in the text by several of the buzz phrases of Communism, including *budování / výstavba socialismu / socialistická výstavba* (the construction of socialism / socialist construction), cited seventeen times, and *únor / Vítězný únor / únorové vítězství* (February / Victorious February / the February Victory [1948]), cited thirteen times.[61] The concrete achievements of the regime, as identified in the document, broadly relate to the themes of economic, cultural and social progress, and freedom from the threat of disturbance; for instance, *úspěchy v politickém, hospodářském a kulturním životě našeho lidu* (successes in the political, economic and cultural life of our people),

[60] Tom Dickins, 'Historical "Signposts" and Other Temporal Indicators in the Czech Lexicon', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 90, 2012, 4, pp. 601–41 (p. 622).

[61] Note also *poúnorová emigrace* (post-February emigration), cited twice.

byla vytvořena sociální jistota pro pracující lid (social security had been set up for working people) and *nastolení klidu a pořádku* (the establishment of peace and order). The themes of social security and the opportunity to carry out one's work unimpeded, as later encapsulated in the phrase *klid na práci* (let us work in peace; literally 'peace for work'), became central to the regime's attempt to propagate the notion of stability and order based on popular consensus. Ripka comments on the increase in the use of both concepts, and cites the following figures for the collocation *sociální jistota* in *SKT*: 1952 — 0 occurrences, 1969 — 3, 1977 — 74.[62] Judging from the accounts of oral history, the provision of basic social services remains the aspect of (post-1968) socialism that is most highly regarded by Czech workers to this day.[63]

Much of the content of *Poučení* inevitably focuses on the reasons for the 'crisis' of 1968 and the problems faced by the Party. The mistakes of the past are superficially acknowledged, but they are largely attributed to the influence of forces and phenomena antithetical to ultra-leftist orthodoxy. Many of the manifestations of deviationism are non-specific and formulaic, and are characterized by the use of 'wooden' language (especially nominalizations). Examples include *narušování zásad demokratického centralismu a vnitrostranické demokracie* (erosion of the principles of democratic centralism and intra-Party democracy), and *zanedbávání třídního přístupu ke společenským problémům* (disregard of the class approach to social problems).

Rarely is there any specific recognition of the worst excesses of socialism, except for an oblique reference to the Piller Commission (set up in April 1968 to examine the show trials), which is couched in terms of criticism of the right: [*pravice*] *drze zneužila fakt, že strana přiznala a kritizovala případy porušení socialistické zákonnosti v padesátých letech* ([the right] arrogantly misused the fact that the Party had recognized and criticized cases of the violation of socialist legality in the fifties). As Fidelius has pointed out, the Party only ever alludes to its own mistakes when they are in the past — in the context of the present, the Party is always in the right.[64] Other non-generalized criticism of the past in *Poučení* is largely confined to 'safe' targets, which had already been officially discredited, including Novotný, Dubček's associates, the Action Programme, the media

[62] Vojtěch Ripka, 'Životní jistoty jako nabídka normalizace', in Jan Kalous and Jiří Kocian (eds), *Český a slovenský komunismus (1921–2011)*, Prague, 2012, pp. 193–200 (pp. 197–99).

[63] See, for example, Milan Otáhal, 'Ze života dělníků za tzv. normalizace', in Oldřich Tůma and Tomáš Vilímek (eds), *Opozice a společnost po roce 1948*, Prague, 2009, pp. 110–75.

[64] Fidelius, *Řeč komunistické moci*, p. 137.

and economic reform. Novotný, cited twelve times (once in the adjectival form *novotnovský*), was a useful sacrificial lamb, since his leadership had succeeded in uniting apparently irreconcilable factions in opposition to him. The authors may make a valid point when they state *naprostá většina strany a společnosti zásadně odmítala návrat k metodám A. Novotného* (an absolute majority of the Party and society fundamentally rejected a return to the methods of A. Novotný), but they fail to note that many of those opposed to him were striving for more radical reform.

Dubček, cited 33 times, was more problematic because of his popularity; hence, the disapproval tends to be more measured, and focuses more on his lack of leadership skills than his policies: *A. Dubček neměl předpoklady pro pochopení složitosti situace a rizik spojených se změnou vedení* (A. Dubček did not have the qualifications necessary to understand the complexity of the situation and the risks involved in the change of leadership). The strongest criticism of Dubček is for his support of the declaration of the Central Committee of the KSČ on the night of 20 August 1968 (which made it clear that Warsaw Pact troops had crossed the border without his knowledge). This is described, in an exemplar of Aesopian language, as *netřídní, protiinternacionalistické prohlášení* (a non-class, anti-internationalist declaration). The term *protiinternacionalistický*, applied to a declaration which reflected widepread international dismay about intervention, highlights the semantic elasticity of Communist speak. As Waller has pointed out, the Soviet Union justified the apparent contravention of national sovereignty by distinguishing between 'limited sovereignty' and 'supreme sovereignty', with the latter equating to proletarian (socialist) internationalism.[65]

Spokesmen for the pro-Soviet 'healthy core' of the Party were hamstrung by the fact that their vision of reality did not conform to public sentiment or to the accepted democratic and judicial norms of other (West European) countries. The logic of many of their assertions was contingent on a blind acceptance of the superimposed model; for instance, *co bylo legální, prohlašovalo se za nelegální, zatímco veškerému ilegálnímu počínání kontrarevoluce se dávalo zdání legality* (that which was legal was declared illegal, whilst all manner of illegal counter-revolutionary goings-on were given a semblance of legality). Elsewhere, the use of the reformists' values had become so established in popular parlance that the hardliners had to employ their opponents' terms of reference, qualified by ironic quotation

[65] Waller, *The Language of Communism*, p. 151.

marks, as identified by Young, to establish their own position.[66] A good illustration is the phrase *střetnutí mezi těmi, kdož jsou pro leden, a těmi, kdo jsou proti němu, mezi „progresívními" a „konzervativními" komunisty* (a clash between those who are for January and those who are against it, between 'progressive' and 'conservative' Communists).

The Communists frequently drew on the spurious notion of the collective will of 'the people' (*lid*) and 'the masses' (*masy*) to justify their policies. The term *lid* and its adjectival and adverbial forms *lidový* and *lidově* are cited 62 times in the text, and are distinguished in the corpus from the politically neutral terms *lidé* (people) and *lidský* (human), which occur fifteen times. The noun *masy* is found six times, while its semantically broader adjectival and adverbial forms, *masový* and *masově* (mass), have a combined total of seven citations. What exactly *lid* and *masy* meant was never accurately established. In the 1950s, *lid* broadly defined those members of the working class, especially manual labourers and farmworkers, but also the 'stratum' of the working intelligentsia (*pracující inteligence*), who could be identified with advancing the Communist cause. However, it subsequently came to refer to a wider spectrum of society and, in practice, to almost everyone who was not considered an opponent of the regime. In *Poučení*, it is used to evoke the implausible notion of the (sometimes barely visible and largely silent) majority, who supposedly shared the convictions of the hardline leadership, as in *všechen pracující lid* (all the working people).[67] The descriptor *masy* similarly served as an all-embracing category, which differentiated the bulk of the population from those opposed to the regime, as in the tautology *široké lidové masy* (the broad popular masses).

All except the most naive of unreformed Communists must have known that the intensity of the ideological campaign being waged was incompatible with the level of support that they claimed for themselves. They must have also recognized that many of the figures of speech used in *Poučení* were reminiscent of those of the 1950s. For instance, the notion of the ideological 'battle' is reflected not merely in the more obvious military metaphors, such *as revoluční boj dělnické třídy* (the revolutionary fight of the working class), but also in phrases such as *zápas za existenci našich národů* (the struggle for the existence of our nations), *bránit/uhájit věc socialismu* (to defend the socialist cause), *poctiví pracovníci* […] *byli*

[66] Young, *Totalitarian Language*, pp. 174–76.

[67] For a more detailed discussion of the concept of 'the people', see Waller, *The Language of Communism,* pp. 128–29.

politicky odzbrojováni (decent people […] were politically disarmed), *ofenzívní nástup* (an offensive drive) and „*kdo s koho*" ('showdown'). There are 42 citations of *boj* and its derivatives, *bojovník* (fighter), (*do-*) *bojovat* (to fight) and *bojeschopnost* (fighting ability), and 22 citations of *zápas*. The noun *boj* is especially reminiscent of the early socialist era, as reflected in the figures in *SKT*: 1952 — 2029 ppm, 1969 — 863, 1977 — 1280.

The self-proclaimed defenders of the 'healthy' tendencies repeatedly appealed to Marxism-Leninism as the sole scientifically based guarantor of human progress and unquestioningly extolled the leading role (*vedoucí úloha*) and leading organs (*vedoucí orgány*) of the Party, as legitimized by their ideological credo. The terms *marxismus-leninismus* (Marxism-Leninism) and *marxisticko-leninský* (Marxism-Leninist) are cited 49 times in *Poučení*, while *vedoucí úloha* and *vedoucí orgány* appear fourteen times and six times, respectively. The authors of the text are at pains to establish a close connection between Marxism-Leninism and collective responsibility, as in the expression *jednota strany a čistota jejího marxisticko-leninského učení* (the unity of the Party and the purity of its Marxist-Leninist teachings). The notion of a common purpose is further exemplified by phrases such as *ideová a akční jednota* (unity of ideas and actions) and *kolektivní poznání strany* (the collective consciousness of the Party). Elsewhere, the importance of strict adherence to Party principles is also stressed, as in *jednotný a principiální postup celého vedení strany* (the united and principled forward march of the whole leadership of the Party) and *principiální politika, heroismus a obětavost komunistů* (the principled politics, heroism and self-sacrifice of Communists). The noun *princip* (principle) and its derivative *principální* (of principle), are found 25 times, while the near synonym *zásada* and its derivatives *zásadní* (of principle), *zásadně* (on principle) and *zásadový* (principled) occur sixteen times. The collocations *základní principy* (basic principles) and *základní hodnoty* (basic values) are cited thirteen times and seven times, respectively.

By contrast, the missed opportunities of the Dubček era are associated with equivocation and the absence of a consistent, disciplined and coordinated approach. This is evidenced by phrases such as *slabost a nejednota polednového vedení* (the weakness and disunity of the post-January leadership), *kolísaví členové strany* (wavering members of the Party), *straně chyběl jasný kurs a jednoznačná direktiva pro další postup* (the Party lacked a clear course and an unambiguous directive for further progress), and *uvolnění stranické kázně a celkové organizátorské práce strany a státu* (an erosion of the discipline of the Party and the

entire organizational work of the Party and state).[68] The importance of 'consistency' is denoted by expressions such as *důsledné uplatňování vedoucí úlohy strany KSČ* (consistent application of the leading role of the Party), and accentuated by the 35 occurrences of *pevný* (firm) and its derivatives, as in *upevnit internacionální svazky se Sovětským svazem* (to strengthen the international links with the Soviet Union). The adjective *pevný* is cited ten times, while its cognates, *upevňovat/upevnit* (to reinforce), *upevnění/upevňování* (consolidation), *pevně* (firmly), *pevnost* (resolution), and *nepevný* (unstable) are cited 25 times in total. According to *SKT*, *pevný* and its related forms were similarly prevalent throughout the entire socialist period. For left-wing Communists, firm central control was vital to maintaining Marxism-Leninism as a political philosophy, and legitimizing Soviet power and the international geopolitical status quo.

From the perspective of the Brezhnev leadership, the continued subjugation of Czechoslovakia was essential to preserving the Soviet sphere of influence. However, it came at a considerable price. The attitude of Czechs and Slovaks to the Soviet Union changed hugely as a result of the Warsaw Pact intervention. Established allusions to the Soviet Union as a friend and ally, such as *jediný věrný spojenec Československa* (the one true ally of Czechoslovakia) and *spojenecký svazek se Sovětským svazem* (the bond of alliance with the Soviet Union), now rang hollow, and phrases such as *osvobození naší vlasti Sovětskou armádou* (the liberation of our country by the Soviet army [in 1945]) lost much of their previous resonance. The prioritization of the role of the USSR amongst notional socialist equals, as in s*polupráce se socialistickými zeměmi, a především se Sovětským svazem* (collaboration with socialist countries, and especially the Soviet Union) and *naše svazky se socialistickými zeměmi, zejména se Sovětským svazem* (our links with socialist countries, particularly the Soviet Union), merely reinforced the sense of Soviet hegemony. All except the most orthodox of Communist believers saw the irony in terminology such as *soudružská podpora i pomoc ke zvládnutí situace* (comradely support and help in managing the situation) and *akt internacionální solidarity* (an act of international solidarity). As time went on, the phrase *smlouva o dočasném pobytu sovětských vojsk v ČSSR* (agreement on the temporary residence of Soviet troops in the ČSSR) sounded increasingly risible, especially given the promise in the TASS statement of 21 August 1968 that military units would be withdrawn 'as soon as the emergent threat to the socialist achievements in Czechoslovakia, and the threat to the security of the countries of the

[68] The significance accorded to unity and discipline is addressed in ibid., pp. 43–55.

socialist bloc, have been eliminated'.[69] Even leading ex-Communists, such as Štrougal, have now conceded that the Party could have done more, particularly in the mid 1980s, to initiate a withdrawal.[70]

Many of the other references to Soviet influence employ pejorative prefixes to highlight manifestations of hostility. These include *antisovětská platforma* (anti-Soviet platform), *protisovětská hysterie* (anti-Soviet hysteria) and *rafinovaný protisovětský projev* (a sophisticated anti-Soviet speech). Perhaps the most explicit expressions of opposition to the Soviet Union identified in the text are the celebrations following Czechoslovakia's victories over the USSR in the ice-hockey world championship in March 1969, which resulted in damage to Aeroflot offices,[71] and demonstrations to mark the first anniversary of the military intervention. The trickier matter of Jan Palach's suicide (19 January 1969), in protest against the occupation, is explained away by sophistic dogmatic deduction: *z psychózy vybičované mezi vysokoškoláky vzešla i osobní tragédie studenta Jana Palacha, za jehož smrt nesou představitelé pravice plnou politickou i morální odpovědnost* (the psychosis whipped up among higher education students also resulted in the personal tragedy of the student Jan Palach, for whose death representatives of the right bear full political and moral responsibility).

Several pages are devoted in *Poučení* to the official re-evaluation of the past and of socialist renewal. Particular significance is accorded to the Moscow Protocol ([*moskevský*] *protokol*) — a phrase cited seven times — which endorsed normalization on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, the re-establishment of the leading role of the Party, the elimination of 'anti-revolutionary' organizations from political life and the strengthening of ties with the Soviet Union.[72] Specifically, this meant the purge of 'right-wing' Party members (especially the senior echelons in Prague); winning back the support (or, at least, regaining the passivity) of those fair-weather reformists who still merited the description of *čestní komunisté a poctiví občané* (honest Communists and decent citizens); the exposure of 'Dubček's two-faced politics' (*dvojaká tvář Dubčekovy politiky*) and his removal from office; reasserting control over the mass media and other organs of state

[69] See *Prohlášení šířené Tiskovou agenturou Sovětského svazu (TASS)*, 21 August 1968. Available at <http://www.rozhlas.cz/historie/1968/_zprava/prohlaseni-sirene-tiskovou-agenturou-sovetskeho-svazu-tass--478466> [accessed 6 August 2013].

[70] Lubomír Štrougal, *Paměti a úvahy*, Prague, 2008, p. 229.

[71] The authorities used these incidents as a pretext for a crackdown on dissent. See, for example, Galya Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubček Era, 1968–1969*, Cambridge, 1973, pp. 297–98.

[72] The Moscow Protocol, signed on 26 August 1968, annulled the results of the (extraordinary) 14th Congress of the KSČ, held in Vysočany on 22 August 1968.

power; the suppression of all other forces which threatened democratic centralism; and redirecting economic development, with Soviet help, and in accordance with the Soviet model.

The text is explicit in its criticism of individual reform Communists, especially Josef Smrkovský, with fifteen citations; Oldřich Černík, eleven citations; František Kriegl, nine;[73] Ota Šik, seven; Čestmír Císař, six, and Josef Špaček, six. The only leading public figure to retain at least a degree of respect from all sections of society was the distinguished non-Communist war veteran, Ludvík Svoboda (President of Czechoslovakia from March 1968 to 28 May 1975), cited eight times, who was felt to be almost 'above' politics. Svoboda is described as *velký vlastenec, hrdina protifašistického boje a významný představitel přátelství a spojenectví se SSSR* (a great patriot, hero of the anti-fascist struggle and prominent representative of friendship and entente with the USSR).[74] Acknowledgement of the role of individual hardline Communists is kept to a minimum, although Husák, cited ten times, is praised for his energy and steadfastness (perhaps in an attempt both to curry favour and to reinforce his resolve): *ve vedení strany se velmi aktivně angažoval* ([he] engaged very actively in the Party leadership) and *do vědomí zdravého jádra strany* […] *se G. Husák zapsal svým pevným a smělým jednáním vůči kontrarevoluci a důsledně internacionalistickým postojem při řešení všech otázek* (G. Husák came to the attention of the healthy core of the Party […] through his firm and courageous stance towards counter-revolution and his consistently internationalist attitude in solving all questions).[75]

The three further lexical groupings identified in the document — phrases in double inverted commas, expressions preceded by *takzvaný/tzv.* (so-called), and text highlighted in bold — all serve the purpose of drawing attention to a particular usage. In *Poučení*, inverted commas have at least eight specific (sometimes overlapping) functions: 1) to express irony, as identified by Young: *„nový", „lepší" socialismus* ('new', 'better' socialism); 2) to reject the legitimacy of a term used by others in a different sense, as in *„konzervatismus"* ('conservatism') to define adherence to ultra-leftist views; 3) to denote authorial distance from a concept, as in *další „teorie" o*

[73] Kriegl was the only member of the Party leadership present at the Moscow negotiations (23–26 August 1968) who refused to sign the Moscow Protocol. He was subsequently one of the first signatories of Charter 77.

[74] Svoboda's role in the imposition of normalization has been strongly criticized by historians such as Jiří Pernes, *Takoví nám vládli*, Prague, 2010.

[75] Husák had initially expressed opposition to the 'internationalist' solution of military intervention.

nutnosti vnitřního rozkládání vedoucí úlohy strany (further 'theories' about the necessity of the internal breakdown of the leading role of the Party); 4) to highlight the fact that a phrase has entered into popular parlance, as in *„muži ledna"*; 5) to signal non-standard usage, as in *„odstřel" funkcionářů* (the 'culling' of functionaries); 6) to indicate a change in stylistic register, as in *„kdo s koho"*; 7) to cite slogans and rallying cries, such as *heslo „národní jednota"* (the slogan of 'national unity') and *„všenárodní vlastenecké hnutí"* ('all-nation patriotic movement'), and 8) to quote directly or indirectly, as in *pravicoví představitelé ve vedení strany ujišťovali veřejnost, že je „všechno v pořádku"* (right-wing representatives in the Party assured the public that 'everything is OK').

The phrase *takzvaný/tzv.* (so-called) occurs seventeen times in the text, once in conjunction with inverted commas, in the fifth sense identified above: *požadavek na svolání mimořádného, tzv. „kádrového" sjezdu* (demand for convening an extraordinary, so-called 'Party members'' congress). The principal function of *takzvaný/tzv.* is to undermine the validity of a given notion. It thus generally fulfils a similar role to inverted commas in one or more of the first, second and third senses above, as in *tzv. obrodný proces* (the so-called renewal process), *opoziční, tzv. druhé centrum ve straně* (the opposition, so-called second centre in the Party) and *skupiny tzv. progresivistů* (groups of so-called progressives). Elsewhere, it broadly equates to the fourth sense above, as in *tzv. československá otázka* (the so-called Czechoslovak question), and at least once it qualifies a slogan: *pod heslem tzv. vlastní tvář Čs. zahraniční politiky* (under the slogan of Czechoslovakia's so-called independent [literally 'own-face'] foreign policy).[76]

The use of bold type, in keeping with Czech journalistic convention, is intended to impart gravitas to certain key passages and ideas, but it is so arbitrary and ill-judged in *Poučení* that it contributes virtually nothing to the reader's engagement with or understanding of the document. Sometimes, the highlighted text may summarize a significant point or development, as in ***Ústřední výbor proto považuje Akční program za nesprávný a neplatný dokument, z něhož nelze vycházet v teoretické činnosti i praktické politice strany*** (The Central Committee therefore regards the Action Programme to be an incorrect and invalid document which cannot be applied to the theoretical activities and practical policies of the Party). On occasion, however, it looks like the work of an editor with no interest in the subject matter; see, for example, page 26, where the text ***V politickém***

[76] The possible allusion to 'socialism with a human face' is lost in translation.

systému Československé socialistické republiky (In the political system of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic) appears in bold, followed by normal type face. After the first two-thirds of *Poučení*, the highlighting disappears altogether, as if in recognition of its functional redundancy.

Keywords, cluster types and collocations

Statistically, the top ten non-function word groups in *Poučení* all relate to topics typical of Communist speak, especially politics (*strana* [P/party], *socialismus* [socialism], *pravice* [the right], *politik* [politician], *vedení* [leadership], *komunista* [Communist], *ÚV* [Central Committee], *síly* [forces]), the notion of collective affiliation (*Československo* [Czechoslovakia]), and the role of labour (*práce* [work]). Expressions containing the concept of the 'party' are cited 479 times, and amount to nearly 2.5% of all the vocabulary items in the text (including function words). The noun *strana* is the highest-ranking lexical word, with 285 citations, even if its derivatives and abbreviated and compound forms are excluded. *Strana* is similarly the most common lexical word in *SKT*. By comparison, in the authoritative corpus-based frequency dictionary of Czech, *Frekvenční slovník češtiny*, in which the meanings of homonyms are not disambiguated, *strana* has an average reduced frequency rank of 75.[77] Other politically motivated terms which feature in the top ten lexical words in both *SKT* and *Poučení* are *práce* (work), ranked third and ninth, respectively, and *socialistický* (socialist), ranked fifth and sixth (in its adjectival form only), respectively. By contrast, *pravice* and its derivatives are considerably less common in *SKT* than *Poučení*, although they occur much more frequently in *SKT* in the texts from 1969 and 1977 than from 1952. The figures for the noun *pravice* are: 1952 — 3 ppm, 1969 — 56, 1977 — 50. The 'right' was the preferred enemy in the early normalization period, because it tarred all the opposition with the same brush, and avoided being specific.

[77] František Čermák, Michal Křen et al., *Frekvenční slovník češtiny*, Prague, 2004. Average reduced frequency is a measure of 'intuitive commonness', based both on the frequency of a word in the corpus and on its distribution within the corpus.

Table 1. The Top Ten Lexical Word Groups in Poučení

Lexical groups	**Rank**	**Citations**
strana (285 citations) (P/party), *stranický* (38) (party [adj.]), *nestraník* (2) (non-party member), *vnitrostranický* (2) (intra-party), *protistranický* (10) (anti-party [adj.]), *KSČ* (121), *KSS* (7) / *KS Slovenska* (5) (Communist Party of Slovakia), *KSSS* (9) (the Communist Party of the Soviet Union)[78]	1	479
socialismus (67) (socialism), *socialistický* (111) (socialist), *protisocialistický* (25) / *antisocialistický* (17) (anti-socialist)	2	220
pravice (73) (the right), *pravicový* (79) (right-wing), *pravicově* (24) (right-wing [adv.]), *pravičák* (5) (right-winger), *pravičácký* (1) ([of a] right-winger [adj.])	3	182
politik (20) (politician), *politika* (11) (politics, policies), *politický* (86) (political), *politicky* (4) (politically), *politickoideový* (2) (political and ideological), *vnitropolitický* (3) (internal political)	4=	126
vedení (63) (leadership), *vedený* (1) (led), *vedoucí* (leading) (38), *vést* (to lead) (24)[79]	4=	126
Československo (49) (Czechoslovakia), *československý* (26) (Czechoslovak), *Čs./ čs.* (11) (Cz.), *ČSSR* (28) (the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic)	6	114
komunista (29) (a Communist), *komunismus* (4) (Communism), *Komunistický* / *komunistický* (46) (Communist), *nekomunista* (1) (a non-Communist), *antikomunismus* (3) (anti-Communism), *antikomunistický* (10) / *protikomunistický* (6) (anti-Communist)	7	99
ÚV (Central Committee)	8	94
práce (33) (work), (*do-*) (*roz-*) (*vy-*) (*z-*)*pracovat* (8) (to work [with various prefixes denoting shades of meaning]), *pracující* (37) (worker), *pracovní* (2) (work [adj.]), *pracovník* (1) (worker), *spolupracovník* (1) (co-worker)	9	82
síla (1) (strength), *síly* (66) (forces), *silný* (4) (strong), *sílící* (1) (strengthening [adj.]), *posílit* (2) / *zesilovat* (1) (to strengthen), *posílení* (6) (strengthening)	10	81

[78] This figure excludes ten instances where *strana* does not mean 'party'.

[79] The verb *vést* collocates eleven times with *k* (to lead to), twice with *útok* (to lead an attack), twice with *zápas* (to lead a fight) and once with *boj* (to lead a battle).

The themes of belonging and collective identity are significant in a one-party, largely monocultural state,[80] as evidenced by the relative frequency of *společnost* (society), *společenský* (social/societal), *společenství* (partnership), cited 70 times; *národ* (nation), *národní* (national), *národně* (national[ly]), 64; *stát*, (state), *státní* (state [adj.]), 58; and *země* (country), 58, including sixteen times in the collocation *naše země* (our country). *Poučení* draws a clear distinction between 'us' (Czechs and Slovaks and our allies, the common people, and the 'healthy core' of the Party) and 'them' (perfidious Westerners, relics of the bourgeois past, and reform Communists). Interestingly, the function word *náš* (our), which has a much broader semantic range than English 'our', occurs 122 times, especially in phrases such as *náš lid* (our [= the Czech and Slovak] people) and *naše společnost* (our [= Czechoslovak] society). It is the twentieth most common lemma in *SKT*. Also cited eight times is the phrase *u nás* (cf. German 'bei uns', French 'chez nous'), which can cover a number of meanings, but here tends to mean 'in our country'. Nevertheless, the notions of national, regional and state affiliation were strictly circumscribed by socialist reality. All concepts of belonging were theoretically subordinate to the principle of socialist internationalism, which, in practical terms, meant that they were subject to the economic and political constraints of Soviet foreign policy.[81]

The centrality of the theme of work in the Communist schema is constantly highlighted in the text — in addition to 82 citations of *práce* and its derivatives, there are 33 citations of the more overtly socialist-sounding terms *dělník* (worker), *dělnický* (workers') and *dělnictví* (working-classness). Semantically related lexical groups, such as *činnost* (activity), *čin* (act), *činitel* (public servant), *součinnost* (cooperation), cited 44 times, and *funkce* (function), *funkcionář* (functionary), cited 27 times, also feature prominently. Other politically motivated word groups with a high frequency include *Sovětský/sovětský/-sovětský* (Soviet), *protisovětský/antisovětský* (anti-Soviet), *antisovětismus* (anti-Sovietism), with 60 citations; *třída* (class), *třídní* (class [adj.]), 59; *internacionalismus* (internationalism), *internacionalistický* (internationalist), *internacionál* (international [noun]), *internacionální/mezinárodní* (international), 57;[82] *marxismus-leninismus* (Marxism-Leninism), *marxisticko-leninský*

[80] The distinction between Czechs and Slovaks is of limited relevance here because of their historical and cultural commonalities.

[81] For an in-depth analysis of the limitations of sovereignty, see Waller, *The Language of Communism*, pp. 144–47.

[82] The adjective *mezinárodní*, cited sixteen times, is the semantically more neutral of the two.

(Marxist-Leninist), 49; *orgán* (organ), 43; *člen* (member), *členský* (member [adj.]), *členství* (membership), and other derivatives, 40; *organizace* (organization), *organizační* (organizational), (*z-*)*organizovat* (to organize), and other derivatives, 37; *moc*/*mocnost* (power), *mocenský* (of power]), 33; *ideologie* (ideology), *ideologický* (ideological), *ideologicky* (ideologically), 31; *úloha* (role), 30; and *s.*/*soudruh* (comrade), *soudružský* (comradely), 30.[83] The fact that the same buzzwords are repeated is not in itself surprising in a text of this nature.[84] Repetition is a major element of political rhetoric, and can be highly effective, if used judiciously. However, in *Poučení* much of it is redundant, and seeks to harangue and traduce, rather than to persuade. Far from engaging the reader, it contributes significantly to the 'heaviness' of Communist speak, as identified by Thom.[85] The hardliners chose not to make stylistic concessions, since to do so would be to introduce precisely the type of nuance and more complex perspective that they were seeking to eradicate.

As in all forms of discourse, the words used derive much of their meaning and perlocutionary force from their co-occurrence with other lexemes. For example, of the twelve citations of *hnutí* (movement), ten are preceded by *komunistické* (Communist); of the 24 citations of the adverb *pravicově*, seventeen are followed by *oportunistický* (opportunist) and two by *revizionistický* (revisionist); and of the eighteen citations of *bratrský* (fraternal), fourteen are followed by *strana* and two by *země*. Like *pravice* and its cognates, *oportunismus* and *revizionismus* and their cognates are more widely used in the later socialist period than in the early 1950s, on the evidence presented in *SKT*. Statistically less common, but nevertheless striking, are the four instances of the expression *frakční činnost* (factional activity); the co-occurrence, twice in four-word phrases, of *mírový* (peaceful),[86] *pokojný* (quiet) and *práce* (work); and the four examples of *chyby* (mistakes) and *nedostatky* (shortcomings) within one word of each other. Even more noteworthy is the excessively stylized collocation *poctiví občané* (honourable citizens), cited six times, in each case to denote opponents of reform, which may have unwittingly left its mark on

[83] There are no citations of *soudružka* (female comrade), and there is barely any mention of women throughout the document. Czechoslovak politics in the 1960s was dominated by men.

[84] Ant Conc records 5,308 word types, but this figure is misleadingly high because it treats each inflected form of a headword as a discrete type.

[85] Thom, *Newspeak*, pp. 21–22.

[86] Young, *Totalitarian Language*, p. 189, has described 'peace' as 'perhaps the mostly widely used god-term in Soviet propaganda since the Second World War'.

subsequent usage. In SYN 2010, *poctiví občané* is found just three times in the nominative case, whereas the more neutral-sounding *slušní lidé* (decent people) occurs 94 times.[87] The reiteration of stock phrases and cluster types, such as *poctiví občané*, serves to reinforce their status as immutable concepts, thereby helping to redefine the parameters of the political debate.

It is even more difficult to assess the statistical significance of the frequency of collocations in a propagandistic document such as *Poučení* than to establish the likely occurrence and importance of lexemes and their derivatives.[88] Sometimes, where a phrase has become a fixed expression and/or is critical to the development of the discourse, even a large number of citations may be unremarkable, as with *ústřední výbor* (central committee), mentioned 34 times. Elsewhere, as few as four citations may exceed probability, especially where one or more of the elements does not feature prominently in the standard lexicon, as with *frakční činnost*, (found just five times in SYN 2010). Suffice it to say, the more unusual a recurrent collocation is, the more conspicuous it appears, and the greater its impact is likely to be.

In *Poučení*, repetition is often combined with hyperbole or emotive vocabulary to impress on the reader the gravity of a given situation or the importance of a particular point. The adjective *velký* (big, great) and its comparative form *větší* occur 28 times in the document, while *rozhodující/rozhodný/rozhodně* (decisive/decisively), *hlavní* (main), *významný/významně* (significant/significantly) and *značný/značně* (considerable/considerably) are found 34, 19, 15 and 14 and times, respectively. Marxism-Leninism and the Communist Party are associated with positive superlatives such as *nejprogresivnější ideologie* (the most progressive ideology), *nejlepší a nejpokrokovější kulturní hodnoty* (the best and most advanced cultural values), *nejušlechtilejší tužby a cíle* (the most noble aspirations and aims) and *odkaz nejlepších synů strany, K. Gottwalda,* (the legacy of the best sons of the Party, of K. Gottwald [President of Czechoslovakia, from 1948 to 1953]).[89] Other 'left-wing' qualities stressed in the document include certainty, endeavour, efficacy, courage and self-sacrifice: *politické i právní jistoty občanů* (the political and legal certainties of citizens), *cílevědomě rozvíjené úsilí marxisticko-leninských sil* (the tenaciously developed efforts

[87] By way of further comparison, *slušní občané* (decent citizens) and *poctiví lidé* (honourable people) are cited nine and ten times, respectively.

[88] The text is too short and too narrowly focused to yield, say, meaningful T-scores or MI-scores.

[89] Gottwald was a ruthless Stalinist, but as the first 'worker president' he was immune from serious criticism.

of the Marxist-Leninist forces) and *statečný a obětavý boj* (courageous and sacrificial struggle). There is no room for equivocation, relativism or self-doubt in the world-view of the orthodox 'believers', and apparently less still for modesty and humility.

In contrast with the 'left', the 'right' is identified with expressive negative epithets, such as *krize*, *krizový* [adj.] (crisis), *nebezpečná činnost* (dangerous activity), *ovzduší nejistoty* (an atmosphere of uncertainty), *vyzývavost a troufalost* (provocation and cheek) and *zrada socialismu* (the betrayal of socialism). Unsurprisingly, according to *SKT*, *krize* and its derivatives were far more common in the post-1968 lexicon than in the early 1950s, whereas the noun *zrada* (betrayal), cited once in *Poučení*, was more prevalent in the Stalinist period. While *krize* conveyed exactly the image of 1968 that the Party wanted to fix in people's minds, *zrada* was perhaps generally felt to be too uncompromising and too reminiscent of the language of the show trials. The latter was also problematic because many ordinary people associated the term specifically with the conduct of the hard left, and more especially with the signatories of the invitation letter, whom they dubbed *zrádci* (traitors).

The right is directly blamed for the erosion of the authority of the Party and the socialist system, as in *postupný rozklad řídící struktury strany* (the gradual disintegration of the regulatory structure of the Party) and *rozklad socialistické moci* (the disintegration of socialist power). Amongst the sub-groups allegedly under the sway of the 'right', and targeted for trenchant criticism in *Poučení*, are the media, the Municipal Committee of the KSČ in Prague, the Catholic Church in Slovakia, the intelligentsia (especially in the humanities) and writers. (Unsurprisingly, there are no allusions to the extraordinary flowering of Czech culture in the 1960s, since this represented a critical response to the values of socialist realism, which had formed a major part of the hardliners' cultural repertoire.) Činátl has pointed out that the text blames the 'right', in the aftermath of the occupation, for unleashing 'an elemental and uncontrollable process', which served to disorientate ordinary people, as evidenced by the phrases *lavina šovinismu* (avalanche of chauvinism) and *smršť šovinistické demagogie* (tornado of chauvinistic demagogy).[90] The theme of natural phenomena is reinforced by the lexical group *živel* (element), *živelný* (elemental), *živelnost* (elemental force), cited nineteen times, as in *protisocialistické živly* (anti-socialist elements) and *nebezpečí živelnosti polednového vývoje* (the danger of the elemental force of the post-January

[90] Činátl, *Téma*, p. 5.

development). The fact that the events had a life force of their own, which swept people along in spite of themselves, strengthens the 'get-out clause' for those who choose to re-evaluate the past. The reference to natural processes also has echoes of the 'organic metaphor', identified by Thom as central to Communist ideology, which moves from 'the biological world to the world of morality'.[91] Yet, for many Czechs and Slovaks, appelations such as *kontrarevoluční živly* (counter-revolutionary elements), cited six times, were downright provocative, since they implicitly stripped them of their humanity. This was demonstrated most clearly in January 1989, during 'Palach Week', when the crowds turned against the authorities with chants of *My nejsme živly*! (We are not elements!) and *Kde máte ty živly?* (Show us these elements, then!; literally 'Where do you have these elements?').

Other miscellaneous lexical items which occur mainly in disparaging collocations include *různý* (different), and its superlative form *nejrůznější*, cited fifteen times, as in *různí oportunisté a kariéristé* (various opportunists and careerists); *platforma* (platform), cited nine times, as in *ucelená antisovětská platforma* (comprehensive anti-Soviet platform); and *heslo*, also cited nine times, as in *pseudovlastenecké výzvy a hesla* (pseudo-patriotic appeals and slogans). Overall, more words are employed in a negative than a positive context, with the result that the document has the tone of a hectoring lament rather than an upbeat evaluation of the successes of the past and hopes for the future. The authors of *Poučení* arguably had little choice but to focus on castigating their opponents since, in the absence of widespread support, their very legitimacy depended on taking control of meaning and promoting the irreconcilability of antithetical forces.

Conclusion

If, in early 1971, anyone still had doubts about the future direction of Czechoslovak society, they needed to look no further than *Poučení* to confirm (or in some cases, perhaps, to allay) their fears. Granted, the document did not predict the precise details of real socialism, such as the role that officially santioned low-level consumerism and populist culture would play in promoting acquiescence. Nor did it anticipate that people's growing disillusionment with the system would result in such large-scale disengagement from public life.[92] It did, however, make the parameters of

[91] Thom, *Newspeak*, pp. 32–38.

[92] The disengagement took various forms, including escaping to weekend houses and country cottages (*chataření* and *chalupáření*), joining specialist (overtly non-political) organizations, such as folk ensembles, and building family homes, especially in villages.

the post-1968 discourse abundantly clear, and it symbolically reaffirmed the authority of the orthodox wing of the Party. For all its stylistic flaws and other weaknesses, the text contributed to the re-establishment of, what has been aptly termed by some political scientists, a logocracy or orthogloxy — rule by the manipulation of the word.[93] Biľak and his co-authors were little troubled by the finer nuances of language or the subtleties of the truth, and were not even particularly exercised by the question of how best to win over hearts and minds. Their overriding motivations were to re-impress on the population, in unambiguous terms, that there was no alternative to Marxism-Leninism, and to show to Moscow that they had understood the 'lessons' of 1968. *Poučení* was significant not because it said anything particularly interesting or original, but because of the authority vested in it by the ruling elite, and because of the perlocutionary force that it derived from people's real-world knowledge and other texts in the public domain.

In the dogmatists' narrow terms of reference, *Poučení* was at least a partial success. It served to delimit the scope of the investigation into the past; it identified appropriate scapegoats; it issued a further reminder to would-be reformists that their plans had been thwarted; it silenced less strident voices in the Party; it removed scope for alternative interpretations; it produced an ideological blueprint for future conformity; and, critically, it gained the approval of the Kremlin by ticking all the right political boxes. Kieran Williams has pointed out that 'The Soviets were delighted with the outcome of 1970, in particular the adoption in December of the *Lessons* […]'.[94] Amongst the major themes that the text accentuated were the importance of the leading role of the Party, the need for Communist discipline and resolve, the continued challenge to socialism from the bourgeoisie, the dangers posed by revisionism, the inviolability of socialist internationalism (that is, the unbreakable bond between the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies), and the imperative of military intervention. Its greatest achievement, from the perspective of the hardliners, was that it enshrined their victory over Dubček and his supporters, and reasserted the rigid norms of Communist stylistics and semantics.

Poučení was the rare combination of a document with few discernible merits, but with considerable impact factor. Far from all of its impact,

[93] See, for example, Mikhail Heller, *Cogs in the Soviet Wheel: The Formation of Soviet Man*, London, 1988, pp. 273–74, translated by David Floyd; Wolf Moskovich, 'Planned Language Change in Russian since 1917', in Michael Kirkwood (ed.), *Language Planning in the Soviet Union*, London, 1989, pp. 85–99 (p. 88), and Luciano Pellicani, *Revolutionary Apocalypse: Ideological Roots of Terrorism*, Westport, CT, 2003, pp. 234–35.

[94] Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath*, Cambridge, 1997, p. 248.

however, could be construed as positive. It proved an endless source of frustration both to teachers and pupils, who not only had to cope with the turgid style, hackneyed themes and formulaic approach, but also had to provide the 'correct' replies to unanswerable questions, based on highly suspect propositions, such as 'Why is the leading role of the working class and the Communist Party the main guarantor of socialism in every socialist country?'[95] The publication may have alienated more readers from Marxism-Leninism than it converted to the cause, and it almost certainly undermined Czechoslovakia's post-war progressive consensus and egalitarian ethos. In terms of intra-Party politics, it stifled debate, promoted complacency, and led to the further entrenchment of the 'conservative' faction both amongst the hierarchy and at a regional level. More damaging still for advocates of reform socialism, it negated the spirit of the Prague Spring, and helped to engender an atmosphere of cynicism and apathy. Even today, *Poučení* stands for many as a potent reminder of the dashed hopes, despair and distortions of the normalization era.

[95] School edition, p. 24 (see note 8).